

Message Text

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11

ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 PM-07 NSC-07 SP-03 SS-20 RSC-01 L-03

CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 PA-04 USIA-15 PRS-01

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R 220727Z APR 74

FM AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8637

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH

AMEMBASSY SAIGON

CINCPAC

USSAG

AMCONSUL HONG KONG

C O N F I D E N T I A L VIENTIANE 3175

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, LA, TH

SUBJECT: PRIME MINISTER DISCUSSES THAILAND

1. PRIME MINISTER SOUVANNA PHOUMA DISCUSSED THAI-LAO RELATIONS WITH UNUSUAL BITTERNESS AT MY HOUSE LAST NIGHT. I HAD HOPED TO PERSUADE HIM THAT THE PGNU SHOULD MAKE A FRIENDLY GESTURE TOWARD THE SANYA GOVERNMENT, BUT FOUND THAT SUCH A GESTURE IS OUT OF THE QUESTION AND THAT SOUVANNA WILL NOT EVEN CONSIDER PASSING THROUGH BANGKOK IN TRANSIT IF HE GOES TO EUROPE.

2. SOUVANNA'S IRE WAS PROVOKED BY THE MANNER IN WHICH THE BANGKOK PRESS HAS EXAGGERATED RECENT INCIDENTS IN THE THAKHEK AREA. HE CATEGORIZED THESE AS INACCURATE AND PURPOSELY SLANTED TO PROTRAY THE SITUATION IN LAOS AS A SHAMBLES. THE THAI HADVE ALWAYS HELD THE LAO IN CONTEMPT, HE SAID, BUT THE ARROGANCE AND CORRUPTION OF THE THAI LEADERSHIP ARE SHOCKING. SOUVANNA THEN DESCRIBED AT LENGTH THE OPULENCE OF DAWEE'S

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PRIVATE ISLAND WITH QUARTERS FOR 300 GUESTS.

3. SOUVANNA SAID HE WAS DETERMINED TO BREAK LAOS' DEPENDENCE ON THAILAND. THE REFUSAL OF THE THAI TO ALLOW AIR FRANCE TO TRANSIT BANGKOK ON THE WAY TO VIENTIANE WHEN FIFTEH FREEDOM TRAFFIC WAS NOT EVEN INVOLVED WAS TYPICAL OF THAI ATTITUDES. THE ETO HAD BEEN A SCANDAL FOR YEARS. SOUVANNA SAID HE INTENDED TO VISIT BOTH HANOI AND SAIGON IN THE NEXT FEW MONTHS AND WORK OUT ALTERNATE ROUTES TO THE SEA.
WHITEHOUSE

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NNN

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